

Whittier - Working to make our communities safer and to ensure that our first responders have the necessary funding to protect our homeland security, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-39th) today met with Whittier police and firefighters. Whittier is the first stop on her tour of 39th district departments.

“As the new representative for the 39th Congressional district, I want to sit down with police and firefighters to discuss ways that we can work together to make our communities safer places. These men and women are on the front lines protecting and serving residents every day. It is important to get their perspective, assess their needs, and discuss opportunities for federal resources,” said Congresswoman Sánchez.

Sánchez wants to ensure that these departments have access to all available federal funding. For example, the Department of Justice offers numerous programs that can provide a wide array of resources for police departments such as bulletproof vests, more cops on the street, and training, as well as technology and equipment.

In addition, funding opportunities exist for fire departments in the areas of emergency preparedness and homeland security. There are programs offered through the Homeland Security Department, the Department of Justice’s Office of Domestic Preparedness, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and health preparedness grants through the U.S. Health and Human Services Department. These grants can help address infrastructure needs such as centralizing command posts, training, equipment, and outreach programs.

Sánchez also wants to make it possible for our communities to have direct access to homeland security funding. She is an original sponsor of the “Homeland Security Block Grant Act of 2003,” H.R. 1007. This legislation provides block grants that go directly to local communities across the country to supplement first responder services. Specifically, the bill would provide \$3.5 billion in funding for communities across the country.

“Police and firefighters are an integral part of our nation’s homeland security. Taking advantage of federal grants and new funding opportunities will benefit their departments and the residents of our communities,” concluded Sánchez.